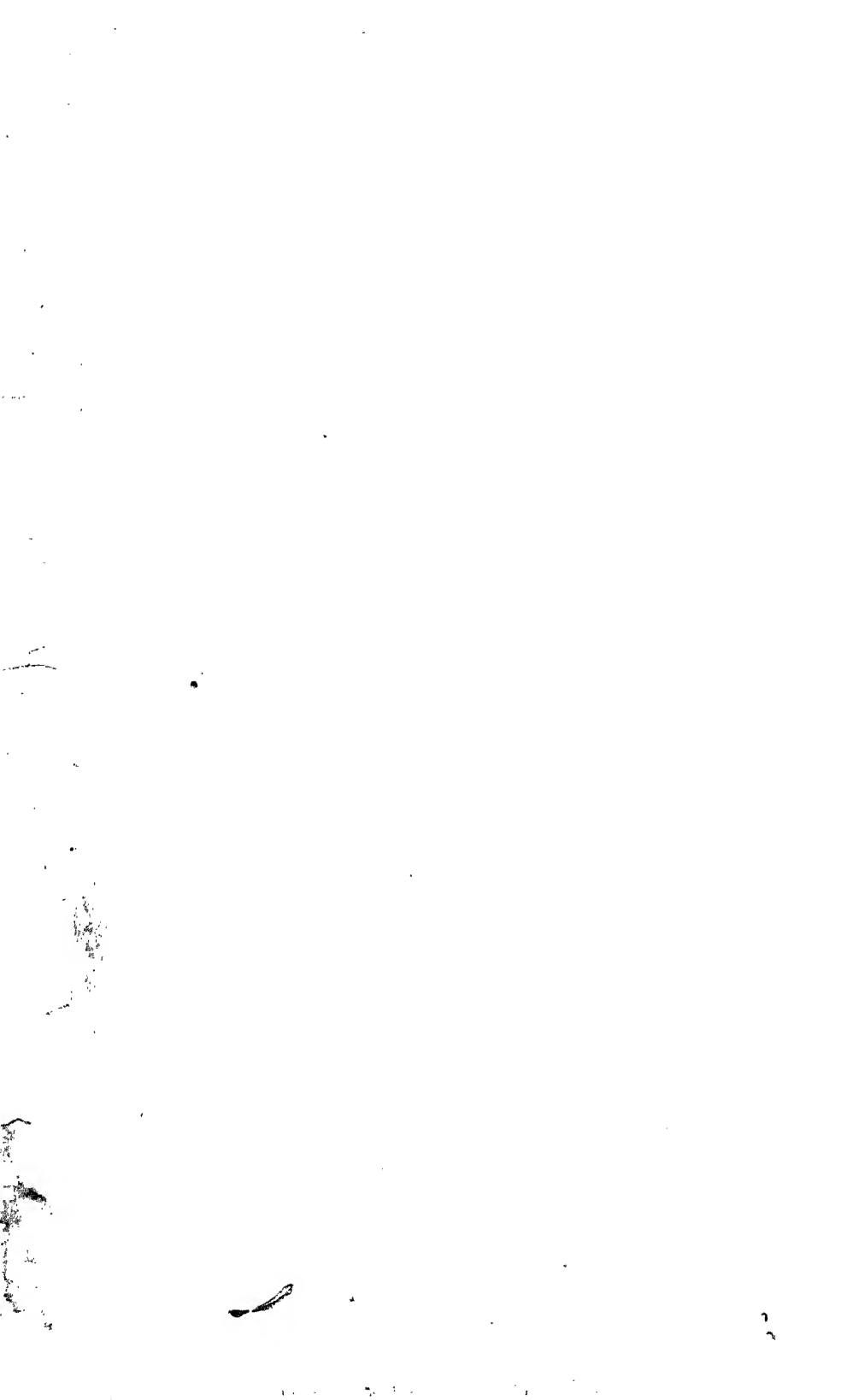


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VĀSAVADATTĀ

*Being a translation of an anonymous
Sanskrit drama*

SVAPANAVĀSAVADATTĀ

attributed to

BHĀSA

BY

V. S. SUKTHANKAR



HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS
1923.

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PREFACE

THE SVAPNAVASAVADATTA is one of a highly interesting group of Sanskrit dramas discovered a little over a decade ago in the course of a search for Sanskrit manuscripts conducted under the distinguished patronage of His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore. The authorship of these plays is still under discussion ; but several well-known critics, men whose researches in Sanskrit literature entitle them to speak with authority, agree in attributing them to the celebrated playwright BHASA, one of the earliest of the great Sanskrit dramatists. They have made out a strong *prima facie* case, and, to our mind, the attribution of the plays to Bhasa has not been satisfactorily disproved. Nevertheless we wish to make clear that, in publishing a translation of the *Svapnavasavadatta* as a drama attributed to Bhasa, we have only tentatively accepted the theory of his authorship.

There are thirteen dramas in this group, several of which deserve, in our estimation, to rank as *chefs-d'œuvre* of Hindu dramatic genius. If they are as old as some critics think, they will undoubtedly prove of high importance for the study, not merely of Hindu drama, but of drama in general. They are rough-hewn and unpolished, with the impress of the embryonic stage of an art, yet one strong and virile ; and they afford us, we believe, a peep into the workshop of the Hindu dramatist. His art we find fully developed in the plays of Kalidasa : they are the finished product. A happy feature of the Travancore plays is their simplicity and vigour. This will be of special appeal to students of the Sanskrit drama. Much of the late drama, in its period of decline, is characterised by a

predominance of descriptive and narrative elements, and the laboured and excessively ornate style of that late drama is a disfigurement. "Rhetorical embellishment" is assigned a place proper to itself in the scheme of composition of the Travancore plays: the main appeal is direct and vitally human. Further, the plays shed light incidentally on much-discussed literary-historical problems, such as the inter-relation of the Hindu drama and the Hindu epic; but these are questions of a technical character, and must not detain us here.

The interest of the plays, whatever be their significance in the eyes of the philologist, extends beyond the narrow circle of savants. A play like the *Svapnavasavadatta*, it may be said without fear of contradiction, is the glorious heritage of the whole civilised world. The eternal lesson of the reward of devotion and love, taught by our author in simple language and with penetrating directness, is one of universal application. All that is best in human nature here finds noble expression. This estimate of the merits of the drama is vindicated by the feelings of genuine interest which it has evoked among the *literati* of Europe. Independent translations have already appeared in German, French and Italian.

The plot of this love drama is derived, like that of so many other Hindu dramas, from the singularly rich storehouse of Hindu legendary lore. The romance of UDAYANA and VASA-VADATTA was at one time as popular a theme of fiction in India as those of Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet, and Paolo and Francesca were in the West. The touching and romantic episodes in their eventful life-history have formed the warp and woof of many an alluring tapestry of love-romance, deftly woven. We may mention the *Pratijna-Yaugandharayana*, another of the dramas belonging to the group. It is based on an episode gleaned from the same legendary cycle, and deserves to be read along with the play that we have

translated. Of all the dramas written round this theme, however, the *Śvapnavasavadatta* stands out as easily the best. The picture painted in it in broad outline is as different from the scenes of petty intrigue, gallant adventure, and shallow sentimentality of plays like the *Priyadarsika* and *Ratnavali* as the grand mural frescoes of Ajanta are from the miniature paintings of a later age.

Incorporated in an old collection of stories that goes by the name of the *Katha-sarit-sagara* ("The Ocean of the Streams of Story") is a metrical version of the romance of Udayana and Vasavadatta. In the appendix will be found Mr. C. H. Tawney's translation, abridged, with slight alterations. It was this legend, or perhaps an older version of it, that in all likelihood suggested his plot to our dramatist. The differences between the narrative and the dramatic versions are of varying importance. We will single out for comment here one that we think reveals the genius of the dramatist more clearly than any other. It will be seen that in the narrative Udayana is allowed to suspect that the conflagration in which Vasavadatta is supposed to have perished is but a stratagem of the resourceful Yaugandharayana, leaving room for the hope that Vasavadatta may in the fulness of time be restored. The dramatist, rightly feeling that this weakened the plot, eliminates all possibility of such an inference. In the drama the minister is supposed by the king to have perished along with the heroine. A comparison of other details of the narrative and dramatic versions cannot but show the felicitous utilization by the dramatist of all the effective *motifs* of the original. The plastic modelling of the prosaic incidents of the original legend testifies to the great dramatic talent of the author. A studied unity of purpose runs through the drama, binding the component parts closely together. The aim of the dramatist is to portray on the one hand the complete self-abnegation of the noble queen, who suffers martyrdom for the sake of her lord

with cheerful resignation, and on the other hand to depict her husband as at heart true to his love, while unwillingly submitting to the exigencies of the life of a king. The burden of the story is the triumph of steadfast, unfaltering, undying Love, for which no sacrifice is too great. The action is kept free from all trace of melodramatic surprise: the movement is smooth, measured, and characterized by classic dignity.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE KING. UDAYANA, king of Vatsa.

YAUGANDHARAYANA, chief minister of Udayana, appearing
disguised as a wandering mendicant.

THE JESTER. VASANTAKA, the confidant of Udayana.

A STUDENT OF THEOLOGY.

TWO GUARDS, one of whom is called SAMBHASHAKA.

VASAVADATTA, daughter of Pradyota Mahasena king of
Avanti, and wife of Udayana, appearing
disguised as AVANTIKA.

PADMAVATI, sister of Darsaka king of Magadha.

A HERMIT-WOMAN.

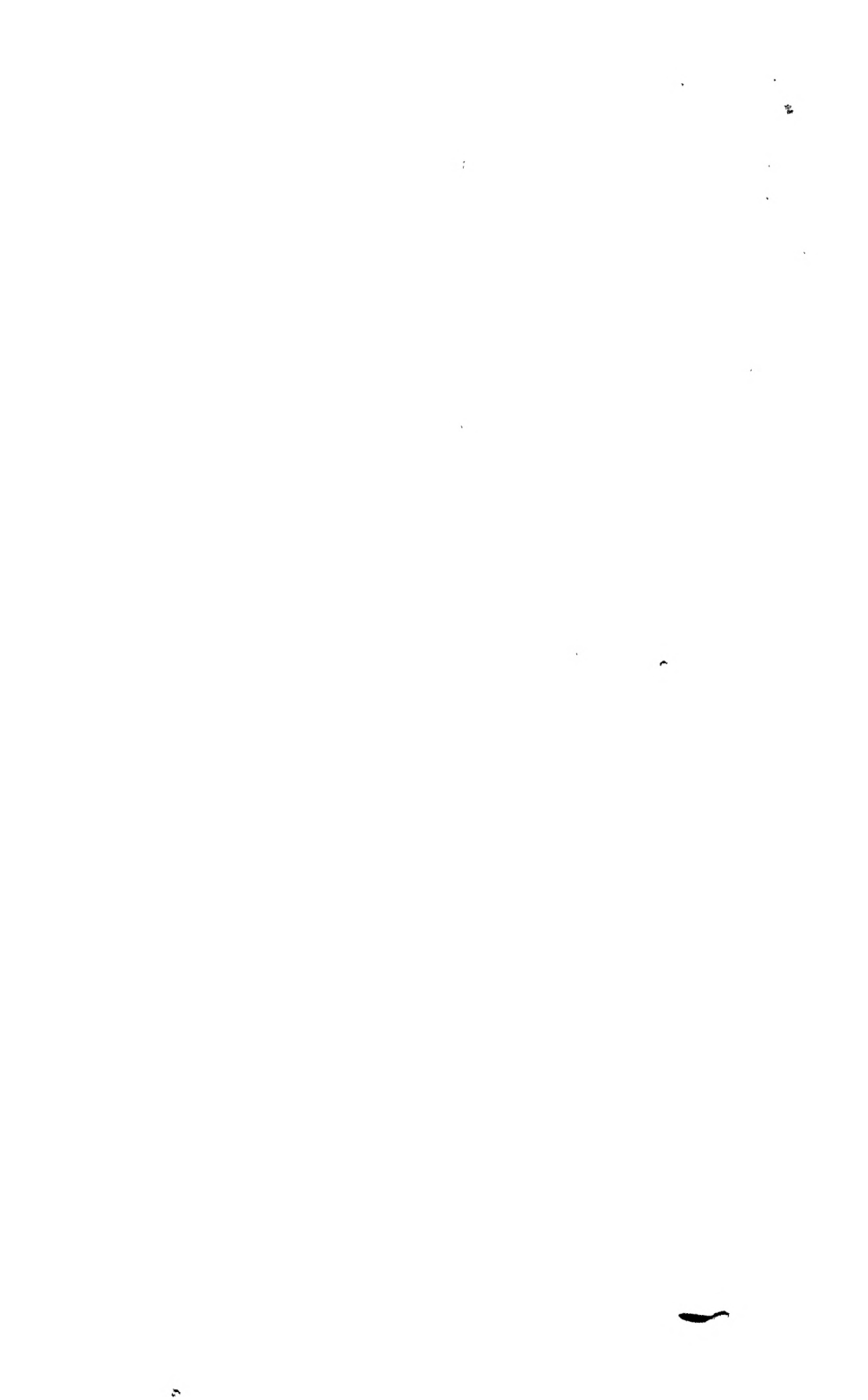
MADHUKARIKA }
PADMINIKA } gentlewomen attending on Padmavati.

A DOOR-KEEPER by name VIJAYA.

THE NURSE OF VASAVADATTA by name VASUNDHARA.

THE NURSE OF PADMAVATI.

Stage-director (appearing in the Prelude), hermits, chamberlains,
and palace attendants.



P R E L U D E

The invocation being ended, enter the stage-director

THE STAGE-DIRECTOR

"May² the arms of Baladeva protect thee,—the arms which are of the colour of the new-risen moon, languid from the effects of wine, resplendent with manifest beauty, thrilled with the joy of Spring!" 1

I beg to inform the honourable gentlemen as follows :—Ah ! How now ! Even as I am on the point of making the announcement, it seems to me I hear a noise. Well, I'll see.

Behind the scenes

Make way, make way, sirs. Make way !

THE STAGE-DIRECTOR

Well, now I understand.

The devoted servants of the king of Magadha², who are escorting the princess, are turning away unceremoniously all the people of the hermitage. 2

Exit

ACT THE FIRST

TWO GUARDS

Entering

Make way, make way, sirs. Make way !

Enter Yaugandharayana in the garb of a wandering mendicant, and Vasavadatta, disguised as Avantika

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Listening

What, even here people are being turned away ! Why—

molest the serene and venerable folks that dwell in the sacred grove, clad in bark of trees and content with fruits of the forest ? Oh, who is this haughty, insolent fellow, blinded by fickle fortune, who by issuing a command profanes this tranquil grove of penance.

3

VASAVADATTA

Sir, who is this that turns us away ?

YAUGANDHARAYANA

My lady, he is one who turns himself away from duty.

VASAVADATTA.

Sir, I did not mean that. But—am I one that may be ordered to make way ?

VASAVADATTA

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Deities unrecognized are even thus spurned
my lady.

VASAVADATTA

Sir, the fatigue causes not such pain as this
humiliation.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

These things³ have been enjoyed and discarded
by my lady. Be not anxious on that account.
For—

*once thou hast had likewise all thy heart's desires,
the victory of thy lord will restore to thee all that is
worthy of praise. Like the array of the spokes of a
wheel does the cycle of wordly fortune revolve with
the course of time !*

THE TWO GUARDS

Make way, sirs, make way !

Enter the chamberlain

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Sambhashaka, indeed, indeed you must not
turn the people away here ! Look !

*Bring not the name of the king in disrepute ;
for one may not deal harshly with those that dwell
in a hermitage. In order to be free from the humilia-
tions of the city do these magnanimous souls retreat
to the forest and dwell there.*

BOTH [GUARDS]

So be it, sir.

[Guards] retire

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Ah, his appearance indicates discrimination.
My child, do let us approach him.

VASAVADATTA

So be it, sir.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Approaching [chamberlain]

Oh, why are the people being turned away ?

THE CHAMBERLAIN

O ascetic !

YAUGANDHARAYANA

To himself

Ascetic is an excellent title indeed. But, being unfamiliar, it does not fasten itself on my mind.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Listen, sirs. This is Padmavati, the sister⁴ of our great king, who has received from the elders⁵ the name Darsaka. After having visited the queen-mother Mahadevi, who has made this hermitage her home, the princess is to proceed, with her permission, to Rajagriha⁶. That is how

she takes pleasure in spending the day here in this hermitage. You may nevertheless—

fetch from the forest at your pleasure holy water, faggots, flowers, and grasses, which are the riches of the hermits. The law is cherished by the princess. Never would she offend against the law of the hermits. This is a vow taken by her family.

6

YAUGANDHARAYANA

To himself

So! This is the Magadha princess Padmavati, of whom the soothsayers Pushpabhadra and others have predicted that she would be the consort of my master. Hence—

*hatred and esteem spring alike out of our desires; because out of my fervent desire to see her wedded to my lord springs up in me a feeling of great devotion towards her.*⁷

7

VASAVADATTA

To herself

After hearing that she is a princess I feel even a sisterly affection towards her.

Enter Padmavati, accompanied by her retinue and a maid

THE MAID

Come, princess, come. Enter this hermitage.

A hermit-woman is discovered seated

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Welcome, princess!

VASAVADATTA

To herself

This is the princess. Her looks beseem well
her noble birth.

PADMAVATI

Madam, I salute you.

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Long life to thee ! Come in, child, come in.
A hermitage is indeed the home of the wayfarer.

PADMAVATI

Enough, madam, enough. I feel reassured.
I am beholden unto you for these courteous words.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Not only her appearance but her voice also is
sweet indeed.

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

[To the maid]

Dear child, has no king proposed marriage to
this sister of our gracious king ?

THE MAID

Yes, there is king Pradyota of Ujjayini^s. He
sends ambassadors on behalf of his son.

VASAVADATTA

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Well, well ! She has now become ours⁹.

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Her noble form well deserves this honour.
Both these are highly exalted royal families.
So we have heard.

PADMAVATI

Sir, did you come across any ascetics disposed to favour us ?—Invite here all the hermits, with a view to giving them what they want, and ask, “ Does anybody here want anything ? ”

THE CHAMBERLAIN

As you wish, my lady. O ascetics, all ye that inhabit this sacred grove ! Listen, sirs, listen. Her ladyship the princess of Magadha, who is here, with the confidence engendered by your confidence, invites you all that she may bestow largess as a religious duty.

Who wants a pitcher ? Who seeks a garment ? Does any one who has duly completed his investiture need anything for presenting to his preceptor ? The princess, who is a friend to the pious, asks as a personal favour that whoever desires anything may speak out. What may we give to-day, and to whom ?

8

YAUGANDHARAYANA

[To himself]

Ah, I see an expedient. (Aloud.) Sir, I would ask a favour.

PADMAVATI

Happily my visit to the hermits' grove has borne fruit !

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

All the ascetics in this hermitage are well contented. This must needs be some stranger.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Oh, what may we do ?

YAUGANDHARAYANA

This is my sister. Her husband has gone abroad. I would therefore wish her ladyship to look after her for some time. For—

I seek not riches, nor raiment, nor pleasure; not for making a living do I don the hermit's robes.— This prudent young woman knows well the path of duty, and will therefore be able to guard the virtue of my sister.

9

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Humph! The noble Yaugandharayana wishes to leave me here. So be it. He will not act rashly.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

His expectation soars very high indeed, my lady. How can we consent? For—

it is easy to part with wealth, with life, with ascetic power. Everything else is easy to do, but difficult the guarding of a deposit.

10

VASAVADATTA

PADMAVATI

Having first proclaimed, "Does anyone want anything?" it is improper now to hesitate. Pray do as he says, sir.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

These words are worthy of you, my lady.

THE MAID

Long life to the princess, who thus makes good her word!

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Long life to thee, my child!

THE CHAMBERLAIN

So be it, my lady. (He approaches Yaugandharayana.)
Oh, her ladyship accepts the guardianship of your honour's sister.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

I am beholden to her ladyship. Approach her ladyship, child.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

What is to be done? Here I go, unlucky I!

PADMAVATI

Well, well. She has now become ours¹⁰.

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Judging by her looks I should say she also is a princess.

THE MAID

Well said, madam. I too think that she has enjoyed prosperity.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

To himself

Ah, this relieves me of half of my burden. It turns out just as it was planned with the ministers. And now, when my lord has been reinstalled, her ladyship the princess of Magadha will be my surety for the conduct of her ladyship¹¹. For—

Padmavati will be wedded to the king: so it is predicted by those that first foretold our [present] calamity. Relying on their words have I taken this step; for the well-considered words of the seers are never transgressed by Fate.

11

Enter a student of theology

THE STUDENT

Looking upward

It is midday. I am very tired. Where shall I rest now? (He walks about.) Yes, I know. This must be a hermitage all around. Then—

here serenely the fawns are grazing unperturbed, feeling sure of their ground; the trees, all tenderly nurtured, have their branches laden with fruits and flowers; there also abound these splendid herds of tawny kine; and nowhere a sign of soil that is tilled.

Then again this smoke that rises aloft from many places. This is doubtlessly a hermits' grove. 12

I'll walk in. (He enters.) Hallo, here is a person¹² whose presence is not in keeping with a hermitage. (He looks in another direction.) But here are some hermits also. There can be no harm in joining them.—Oh, but the womenfolk !

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Walk in freely, sir, freely. The hermitage is common to all.

VASAVADATTA

Humph !

PADMAVATI

To herself

Ah, this lady shuns the sight of strangers. Well, it will not be difficult to look after my charge.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Sir, we were here before you. Pray accept the hospitality due to a guest.

THE STUDENT

Sipping water

Enough, enough ! The fatigue has passed.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Oh, where are you from ? Whither going ? Which is your home ?

THE STUDENT

Oh, listen. I am from Rajagriha. With a view to qualifying myself in the knowledge of the Vedas I have been sojourning in Lavanaka, a village in the country of the Vatsas¹³.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Ah, Lavanaka ! The utterance of the name Lavanaka reopens old sores.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

And have you finished your studies ?

THE STUDENT

No, not yet.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

If you have not finished your studies, why have you returned ?

THE STUDENT

There occurred in that place a very terrible catastrophe.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

And how ?

THE STUDENT

In that village there dwelt a king by name Udayana.

We have heard of his honour Udayana.
What of him ?

THE STUDENT

Deeply did he love his wife, by name Vasava-
datta, daughter of Avanti's king.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Assuredly. Then ? Then ?

THE STUDENT

Then, once while the king was away hunting,
she perished in a village fire.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

It is false. It is false. Alas, I live, unlucky I !

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Then ? Then ?

THE STUDENT

Then, a minister by name Yaugandharayana,
who sought to rescue her, fell in the same fire.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Did he really ! Then ? Then ?

THE STUDENT

Then the king, having heard the news on
his return, was so grieved at the loss of them both,

that he sought to end his life by throwing himself in that very fire. The ministers had great difficulty in holding him back.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

I know, I know my noble lord's sympathy with me.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Then ? Then ?

THE STUDENT

Then the king, pressing to his heart the charred remains of the ornaments that had adorned her body, fell into a swoon.

ALL

Alas !

VASAVADATTA

To herself

The noble Yaugandharayana is now satisfied. I hope !

THE MAID

Princess, this lady is crying forsooth.

PADMAVATI

She must have a sympathetic nature.

To be sure, to be sure. My sister is sympathetic by nature. Then ? Then ?

THE STUDENT

Then, by degrees, he regained consciousness.

PADMAVATI

[To herself]

Happily he lives ! When I heard that he had swooned, there was a void in my heart.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Then ? Then ?

THE STUDENT

Then the king—his body red with dust with rolling on the ground—got up all of a sudden and lamented incoherently: “ O Vasavadatta !—O princess of Avanti !—O darling !—O beloved pupil !” In short :

Now his sorrow is not to be compared to that of the chakravaka¹⁴ ; nor of any others parted from their mates. Blessed is the woman so cherished by her lord. Though consumed by fire, she endures in life, through the love of her husband.

13

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Oh, but did not some minister seek to console him ?

THE STUDENT

Oh, yes. The minister Rumanvat tried his utmost to console his honour. For he—

like the king, abstains from food ; a constant flow of tears has worn his cheek hollow ; sorrowing with his master he even neglects his toilet ; night and day he waits on the king with diligence. Should the king perchance depart this life, he too would surely die !

14

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Happily my noble lord is in good hands.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

To himself

Oh, what a burden Rumanvat has to bear !

The burden I bear admits of rest ; but he has to toil unceasingly. For on him does all depend on whom the king himself depends.

15

(Aloud.) And, sir, has the king been now consoled ?

THE STUDENT

That I know not. The ministers departed, with great difficulty removing from the village the king, who lamented saying : “ Here I laughed with her !—Here I conversed with her !—Here we passed the night !—Here we had a quarrel !—Here we slept ! ”—and so forth. With the departure of the king the village lost all its charm, like the sky when the moon and the stars have set. And so I came away too.

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Verily he must be a virtuous king, since even this stranger praises him so.

THE MAID

Princess, I wonder, will he give his hand to another ?

PADMAVATI

To herself

That is just what my own heart seeks to know.

THE STUDENT

I would take leave of you. Pray let us go.

BOTH

Go then, sir, and may success wait upon you !

THE STUDENT

Amen !

Exit [student]

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Well, I would also depart with the leave of her ladyship.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

He would depart with the permission of your ladyship.

PADMAVATI

Your honour's sister will be lonely in the absence of your honour.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Being confided to the care of good persons she will not feel lonely. (He looks at the chamberlain.)
Pray let us go.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Go then, sir, and may we meet again !

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Amen !

Exit [Yaugandharayana]

THE CHAMBERLAIN

It is now time to retire.

PADMAVATI

Madam, I salute you.

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Child, mayest thou find a husband worthy of thee !

VASAVADATTA

Madam, I salute you.

THE HERMIT-WOMAN

Mayest thou also be united with thy husband ere long !

VASAVADATTA

I am beholden to you.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Come along then. This way, this way, my lady. Now—

have the birds retired to their nests ; the hermits have entered the waters of the pools ; the lighted fires shine forth brightly ; the smoke makes its way through the hermits' grove. And lo ! descended down from high, even yonder Sun, with rays drawn in, turns back his car and slowly alights on the peak of the Western Mount !

16

Exeunt omnes

ACT THE SECOND

INTERLUDE

Enter a maid

THE MAID

Kunjarika, Kunjarika ! Where, where is the princess Padmavati ? What dost thou say : "Here is the princess playing ball near the jasmin bower" ?—Then I'll approach the princess. (She walks about and looks around her.) Ah, here comes the princess herself playing ball. Her ear-pendants are swinging in the air. Her face, which wears the beauty of fatigue, is bespangled with beads of perspiration excited by the exercise. I'll approach her.

Exit

Enter Padmavati, playing ball, accompanied by her retinue,
and Vasavadatta.

VASAVADATTA

Here is thy ball, my dear.

PADMAVATI

That will suffice now, madam.

VASAVADATTA

This long game of ball play has made thy hands so red that they seem not to belong to thee at all, my dear.¹⁵

VASAVADATTA

THE MAID

Play on, princess, play on. Make the most of this charming period of maidenhood.

PADMAVATI

Madam, why dost thou regard me as though thou wouldst make fun of me ?

VASAVADATTA

Not at all, not at all, my dear. To-day thou art looking unusually beautiful. And I am looking at thy beautiful face from every side as it were.¹⁶

PADMAVATI

Away with thee ! Pray do not make fun of me.

VASAVADATTA

I shall be mute, O would-be bride of Mahasena's son !

PADMAVATI

And who may this Mahasena be ?

VASAVADATTA

There is a king Pradyota of Ujjayini who, on account of the vast size of his army, is known as Mahasena¹⁷.

THE MAID

The princess does not desire alliance with that king.

VASAVADATTA

Whom would she marry then ?

THE MAID

There is a king of Vatsa by name Udayana.
The princess is enamoured of his virtues.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

She wants my noble lord for her husband !
(Aloud) For what reason ?

THE MAID

Because he is so sympathetic.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

I know, I know. I too was infatuated in the
same way.

THE MAID

Princess, if the king should be ugly ?—

VASAVADATTA

No, no. Indeed he is beautiful.

PADMAVATI

How dost thou know, madam ?

VASAVADATTA

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Partiality to my noble lord has made me overstep the bounds of propriety. What shall I do now? Yes, I have it. (Aloud) The people of Ujjayini say so, my dear.

PADMAVATI

That is so. Indeed it would not be difficult to see him in Ujjayini. And beauty, I suppose, captivates the mind of all alike.

THE NURSE

Entering

Victory unto the princess ! Princess, thou art betrothed—

VASAVADATTA

To whom, madam ?

THE NURSE

To Udayana, king of Vatsa.

VASAVADATTA

Is it well with the king ?

THE NURSE

The king arrived here quite well, and has accepted the hand of the princess.

VASAVADATTA

What an outrage !

THE NURSE

Where is the outrage ?

VASAVADATTA

I suppose it is nothing that after having grieved in that manner he should now turn indifferent !

THE NURSE

Madam, sacred precepts take a pre-eminent place in the hearts of great men, and they are therefore easily consoled.

VASAVADATTA

Madam, did he ask for her hand of himself ?

— THE NURSE

No, no. He came here for some other reason. And our king, finding in him a union of nobility, learning, youth and beauty, himself offered her hand.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

So ! Then my noble lord is not to blame.¹⁸

ANOTHER MAID

Entering

Make haste, madam, make haste. Our queen says : "To-day the stars are propitious, and the ceremony of tying the nuptial knot shall take place this very day."

VASAVADATTA

VASAVADATTA

To herself

The more they hasten, the more densely
does gloom encircle my heart.

THE NURSE

Come, princess, come.

Exeunt omnes

ACT THE THIRD

Enter Vasavadatta meditating

VASAVADATTA

Leaving Padmavati behind in the inner court in the bustle of the nuptial celebration, I have sought this pleasure garden in order to dispel the sorrow laid upon me by Fate. (She walks about.) Oh, what an outrage! Even my noble lord now belongs to another. I will seat myself. (She sits down.) Blessed is the female chakravaka¹⁹! Parted from her mate she does not live. But I do not die. I live on just in the hope of seeing once again my noble lord, unlucky I!

Enter a maid carrying flowers

THE MAID

Where can madam Avantika have gone? (She walks about and looks around her.) Oh, there she is, seated on the stone bench under the priyangu creeper. Dressed in an unadorned but graceful garment, she sits there in meditation absorbed, resembling the crescent moon obscured by mist. I'll draw near to her. (She approaches her.) Madam Avantika, I have been looking for thee ever such a long time.

VASAVADATTA

And why?

THE MAID

Our queen says : " Madam comes of a noble family ; she is affectionate and skilful. Let her therefore make this wedding wreath."

VASAVADATTA

And for whom am I to make it ?

THE MAID

For our princess.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Ah me, this too has fallen to my share ! Oh, verily the gods are pitiless.

THE MAID

Madam, pray let not anything else occupy thy thoughts now. Here is the bridegroom having a bath in the mosaic room. So do make the wreath quickly, madam.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

I cannot think of anything else. (Aloud.)
Hast thou seen the bridegroom, my dear ?

THE MAID

O yes. I saw him, led to do so by my affection for the princess and my own curiosity.

VASAVADATTA

And what is the bridegroom like ?

THE MAID

Madam, I tell thee, never have I seen his like before.

VASAVADATTA

Tell me, tell me, my dear, is he handsome ?

THE MAID

He is god Kama²⁰ incarnate, without the bow and arrow.

— VASAVADATTA

Let that suffice.

THE MAID

Why dost thou stop me ?

VASAVADATTA

It is improper to listen to the praise of a stranger.

THE MAID

Then hurry on with the wreath, please, madam.

VASAVADATTA

VASAVADATTA

Give them here. (To herself) Here am I making the wreath, unlucky I! (She discards some flowers, examines others.) What herb is this?

THE MAID

It is called 'Ward-off-widowhood'.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

This I shall use in plenty, both for myself and for Padmavati. (Aloud.) What herb is this?

THE MAID

It is called 'Crush-thy-rival'. —

VASAVADATTA

This must not be used.

THE MAID

Why not?

VASAVADATTA

His wife is dead. Thus it is useless.

ANOTHER MAID

Entering

Make haste, madam, make haste. Here is the bridegroom being conducted by the matrons to the inner court.

VASAVADATTA

Oh, I say, take this.

THE MAID

Good. I'll go then, madam.

Both [maids] retire

VASAVADATTA

She is gone. Oh, what an outrage ! Even my noble lord now belongs to another. Ah ! I shall go to bed and dispel my sorrow—if I am able to get sleep.

Exit

1

ACT THE FOURTH

INTERLUDE

Enter the jester

THE JESTER

Gleefully

Oh, fortunately have I seen this joyful occasion of the happy marriage of his honour the king of Vatsa ! Oh, who would have known that after being submerged in such a whirlpool of misfortune we should have come to the surface again ? Now we live in palaces, bathe in the wells of the inner apartments, and eat dainty, delicious confections. I am enjoying thus a sojourn in Paradise, but for the company of celestial nymphs. There is just one great drawback. I cannot digest my food properly. I get no sleep [even] on a bed furnished with luxurious coverlets. I notice [signs of] gout everywhere. Oh, there is no happiness [in life] devoid of good health and good cheer !

Enter a maid

THE MAID

Where can the noble Vasantaka have gone ?
(She walks about.) Oh, here is the noble Vasantaka.
(She approaches him.) Noble Vasantaka, I have been looking for thee ever such a long time.

THE JESTER

Observing her

Why hast thou been looking for me, good girl ?

THE MAID

Our queen asks whether the son-in-law has bathed.

THE JESTER

Why does she want to know ?

THE MAID

What else for, but that flowers and unguent may be brought to him ?

THE JESTER

His honour has bathed. Thou mayest bring anything except foodstuffs.

THE MAID

Why except foodstuffs ?

THE JESTER

Unlucky that I am, my inside is going round and round like the eyes of the cuckoo !

THE MAID

Thus mayest thou be !

THE JESTER

Be gone, my lady. I for my part will join his honour.

Both retire

Enter Padmavati, accompanied by her retinue, and Vasavadatta

THE MAID

What brings the princess to the pleasure garden ?

PADMAVATI

I came to see whether the sephalika bushes have blossomed or not, my dear.

THE MAID

They have indeed blossomed, princess. They are laden with flowers that look like pendants of pearls interspersed with coral.

PADMAVATI

If that be so, my dear, why delay ?

THE MAID

Then let the princess sit down for a while on this stone bench, and I for my part shall gather flowers.

PADMAVATI

Shall we sit here, madam ?

VASAVADATTA

VASAVADATTA

So be it.

Both sit down

THE MAID

Having collected flowers

Behold, princess, behold. My joined hands are filled with sephalika blossoms that shine like crystals of arsenic.

PADMAVATI

Observing them

Oh, what a variety of tints these flowers have ! Behold, madam, behold.

VASAVADATTA

Oh, what lovely flowers !

THE MAID

Princess, should I gather more ?

PADMAVATI

No, my dear, gather not any more.

VASAVADATTA

Why dost thou stop her, my dear ?

PADMAVATI

Because when my noble lord comes here and sees this abundant wealth of flowers, I shall be honoured.

VASAVADATTA

Dost thou love thy husband, my dear ?

PADMAVATI

I know not, madam, but when he is away from my side I feel so lonely.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Hard indeed is the lot I suffer when even she speaks thus !

THE MAID

In a dignified way the princess has said :
“ I love my husband.”

PADMAVATI

There is one thing about which I feel some doubt.

VASAVADATTA

What is it ? What is it ?

PADMAVATI

Whether my noble lord was the same to madam Vasavadatta as to me.

VASAVADATTA

And yet more !

PADMAVATI

How dost thou know ?

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Ah ! Partiality to my noble lord has made me overstep the bounds of propriety. This is what I shall say now. (Aloud.) Had her love been less, she would not have forsaken her own people.

PADMAVATI

That is so.

THE MAID

Princess, tell thy husband nicely that thou wouldst also learn to play the lute.

PADMAVATI

I did say that to my noble lord.

VASAVADATTA

Then what did he say ?

PADMAVATI

He said nothing. He heaved a deep sigh and kept still.

VASAVADATTA

What dost thou surmise from that ?

PADMAVATI

I surmise that he recalled the virtues of madam Vasavadatta, and only out of delicacy he restrained the tears in my presence.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Blessed am I if that be true !

Enter the king and the jester

THE JESTER

Hi ! Hi ! How lovely the pleasure garden looks with the bandhujiva²¹ blossoms lying thinly scattered where they have fallen in the course of plucking ! This way, your honour.

THE KING

Here I come, friend Vasantaka, here I come.

When I went to Ujjayini and saw the daughter of Avantî's king, I was thrown into an indescribable state of mind, and then did Kama discharge at me unchecked all his five arrows. The barbs of these still lodge in my heart. And here have I been struck again. When Kama has but arrows five, how could this sixth one be discharged ?

THE JESTER

Where can her ladyship Padmavati have gone ? Has she gone to the arbour of creepers ; or to the stone bench called the ' Forehead-mark

of the Hill', which being strewn with asana blossoms appears to be covered with a tiger's skin ; or to the sapta-chhada²² grove of very pungent odour ; or to the pavilion daru-parvataka adorned with frescoes of birds and beasts ? (He gazes upward.) Hi ! Hi ! See that flight of cranes advancing steadily along the clear autumnal sky. Does it not look like the outstretched, beautiful arm of Baladeva ?

THE KING

I see it, friend.

*Now extended straight, now broken in parts ;
now rising aloft, now sinking low ; in its revolutions
it is twisted like the figure of the Great Bear.
Like a boundary line it divides in twain the sky,
which is spotless like the belly of a serpent in the act
of shedding its skin.* ²

THE MAID

Look, princess, look. See this flight of cranes advancing steadily, white and lovely like a garland of kokanada lotuses. Oh, here is my lord !

PADMAVATI

Humph ! My noble lord ! Madam, for thy sake I shall avoid meeting my noble lord. So let us enter this jasmin bower.

VASAVADATTA

So be it.

They act accordingly

THE JESTER

Her ladyship Padmavati must have come here and gone away.

THE KING

How does your honour know ?

THE JESTER

Your honour may witness these sephalika bushes from which the flowers have been plucked.

THE KING

O Vasantaka, what a variety of tints these flowers have !

VASAVADATTA

To herself

The utterance of the name Vasantaka takes me back to Ujjayini once more.

THE KING

Vasantaka, let us sit down on this stone here and wait for Padmavati.

THE JESTER

Oh, so be it. (He sits down and rises up again.)
Hi ! Hi ! The heat of his autumn sun is unbearable ! Let us enter this jasmin bower.

THE KING

Very well. Lead the way.

VASAVADATTA

THE JESTER

So be it.

Both walk about

PADMAVATI

The noble Vasantaka is about to spoil everything. What shall we do now ?

THE MAID

Princess, I can keep my lord away by shaking this pendent creeper in which the bees are lurking.

PADMAVATI

Do so then.

The maid acts accordingly

THE JESTER

Help, help ! Keep back, your honour, keep back.

THE KING

Why ?

THE JESTER

I am attacked by these bastard bees.

THE KING

Nay, say not so. We must refrain from frightening the bees. Look !

Our footsteps will annoy the melodiously humming bees intoxicated with honey and closely embraced

*by their passion-smitten mates, and like ourselves
they too will be parted from their sweethearts.* 3

Let us therefore seat ourselves just here.

THE JESTER

So be it.

Both sit down

PADMAVATI

Happily my noble lord has seated himself.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Happily my noble lord is enjoying good health.

THE MAID

Princess, we have in truth been made prisoners.—Princess, madam's eyes are filled with tears forsooth.

VASAVADATTA

The pollen of kasa²³ blossoms set wantonly flying by these bees has made my eyes water.

PADMAVATI

Even so.

THE JESTER

Oh, this pleasure garden is deserted. I want to ask your honour something. May I ?

VASAVADATTA

THE KING

At your pleasure.

THE JESTER

Whom do you love : her ladyship Vasavadatta of yore, or Padmavati of the present time ?

THE KING

Why would you place me now in such an extremely awkward predicament ?

PADMAVATI

O dear ! My noble lord is in such a predicament now !

VASAVADATTA

To herself

And I too, unlucky I !

THE JESTER

Tell me without reserve, without reserve. One is dead ; the other is nowhere near.

THE KING

No, my friend. I shall not say. You are talkative.

PADMAVATI

That speaks volumes, my noble lord.

THE JESTER

Oh, I swear to you truthfully. I shall never repeat it to anyone. Here I bite my tongue.

PADMAVATI 24

Ah, what importunity ! That does not suffice to make him understand the sentiments of my noble lord !

THE KING 24

No, friend, I dare not tell you.

THE JESTER

You will not tell me ? If you do not, you shall not stir a step from this stone bench. I hold your honour prisoner.

THE KING

What, by force ?

THE JESTER

Yes, by force.

THE KING

Well, then, we shall see.

THE JESTER

Forgive me, forgive me. In the name of our friendship I conjure thee to tell me the truth.

THE KING

What is to be done ? Listen.

Even though by reason of her beauty, virtue and sweetness I hold Padmavati in high regard, she

has no hold on my heart, which is firmly attached to Vasavadatta.

4

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Well, well. That has given me the recompense for this suffering. Ah ! Even this disguise has many merits !

THE MAID

Princess, really my lord lacks all courtesy.

PADMAVATI

Nay, not at all, my dear. Indeed my noble lord has shown great courtesy in remembering even now the merits of madam Vasavadatta.

VASAVADATTA

Dear child, thy words are worthy of thy noble birth.

THE KING

I have spoken. It is now your honour's turn to say whom you like : Vasavadatta of yore, or Padmavati of the present time.

PADMAVATI

Now my noble lord is playing Vasantaka's part.

THE JESTER

No use of idle talk. Both the ladies I hold in high esteem.

THE KING

Fool, after having thus forcibly heard me,
dost thou refuse to speak now ?

THE JESTER

What, me too, by force ?

THE KING

Yes, by force.

THE JESTER

Then you will never hear it.

KING

Forgive me, O *great* Brahman, forgive me.
Speak of your own sweet will, of your own sweet
will.

THE JESTER

Then listen, your honour. I held her ladyship Vasavadatta in great regard. But her ladyship Padmavati is young and beautiful, without anger and without conceit, affable and courteous. She has this other great virtue. Delicacies in hand, she comes forward saying : “ Where can the noble Vasantaka have gone ? ”

VASAVADATTA

[To herself]

Very well, Vasantaka, very well. Now just remember this.

THE KING

Very well, Vasantaka, very well. I shall relate all this to queen Vasavadatta.

THE JESTER

Alas ! Vasavadatta ! Where is Vasavadatta ?
Vasavadatta is long dead !

THE KING

Dejectedly

So it is ! Vasavadatta is no more !

*With that jest of yours didst thou bewilder my
mind, and by force of old habit did these words
escape me.*

5

PADMAVATI

Truly a charming romance has been spoiled
by the wretch.

VASAVADATTA

To herself

Well, well. I feel reassured. Ah ! How
sweet to hear unobserved such words !

THE JESTER

Courage, your honour, courage ! Fate is
inexorable. It is just so !

THE KING

Friend, you understand not my condition.
For—

it is hard to forget a deep-rooted passion ; memory

constantly revives one's sorrow. It is the way of life that only after paying its tribute of tears does the mind, redeemed, regain tranquility. 6

THE JESTER

[To himself]

His honour's face is wet with tears. I'll fetch water for washing his face.

Exit [jester]

PADMAVATI

Madam, the face of my noble lord is hidden behind a screen of tears. Let us slip away meanwhile.

VASAVADATTA

So be it. Or rather, stay thou here. It would be wrong for thee to go away leaving thy husband in a wistful mood. I shall go alone.

THE MAID

What madam says is right. Let the princess go herself.

PADMAVATI

Should I really go ?

VASAVADATTA

Yes, go, my dear.

Exit [Vasavadatta]

VASAVADATTA

THE JESTER

Entering with a lotus leaf filled with water

Here is my lady Padmavati !

PADMAVATI

Vasantaka, what is this ?

THE JESTER

This is—that ! That is—this !

PADMAVATI

Speak, speak, sir. Speak.

THE JESTER

My lady, the pollen of kasa²³ flowers wafted by the breeze got into the eyes of his honour, and his face is bathed in tears. Take him this water for washing his face, my lady.

PADMAVATI

[To herself]

Ah, the chivalrous master has a chivalrous man ! (She approaches the king.) Victory to my noble lord ! Here is water for washing the face.

THE KING

Ah, Padmavati ! (Aside.) Vasantaka, what is this ?

THE JESTER

Whispering in his ear

It is like this—

THE KING

Good, Vasantaka, good. (Sipping water.) Padmavati, be seated.

PADMAVATI

As my noble lord commands. (She sits down.)

THE KING

Padmavati,—

O beauty, the pollen of kasa²³ flowers, white as the autumnal moon, tossed about by the winds, is the cause of the tears that cover my face. 7

To himself

This young girl is newly wedded. Should she learn the truth, she will be distressed. She is no doubt a courageous little soul; but a woman is by nature easily alarmed. 8

THE JESTER

Your honour, it behoves that this afternoon his honour the king of Magadha should receive his friends, giving you the place of honour. And courtesy reciprocated with courtesy engenders affection. So let your honour arise.

THE KING

Exactly. A prime idea! (He rises.)

It is easy to find among people those that possess great virtue and constantly show courtesy ; but it is difficult to find such as appreciate these qualities duly.

9

Exeunt omnes

ACT THE FIFTH

INTERLUDE

Enter Padminika

PADMINIKA

Madhukarika, Madhukarika ! Come here quick.

MADHUKARIKA

Entering

Here I am, my dear. What may I do ?

PADMINIKA

Dost thou not know, my dear, that princess Padmavati is suffering from headache ?

MADHUKARIKA

Ah me !

PADMINIKA

Go quick, my dear, and call madam Avantika. Tell her merely that the princess is suffering from headache, and she will come of her own accord.

MADHUKARIKA

And what will she do, my dear ?

PADMINIKA

Why, by telling pretty stories, she relieves the headache of the princess.

MADHUKARIKA

That is right. Where has the bed of the princess been arranged ?

PADMINIKA

In the Ocean Pavilion her bed has been spread. Go thou on. I for my part shall look for the noble Vasantaka and through him send word to my lord.

MADHUKARIKA

So be it.

Exit [Madhukarika]

PADMINIKA

Now where shall I find the noble Vasantaka ?

Enter the jester

THE JESTER

In the heart of his honour the Vatsa king, distracted by separation from the queen, the fire of love, now fanned, as it were, by his marriage with Padmavati, burns brighter than ever to-day on the occasion of these extremely joyful nuptial celebrations. (He beholds Padminika.) Hallo Padminika ! What is the news, Padminika ?

PADMINIKA

Why, noble Vasantaka, dost thou not know that princess Padmavati is suffering from headache?

THE JESTER

No, really I knew it not, lady.

PADMINIKA

Well, now inform my lord of it. I for my part will in the meantime hurry up with the ointment for her head.

THE JESTER

Where has the bed of Padmavati been arranged?

PADMINIKA

In the Ocean Pavilion her bed has been spread.

THE JESTER

Go along then, lady. Meanwhile I for my part will inform his honour.

Both retire

Enter the king

THE KING

As now again in course of time I take up the

burden of wedded life, my thoughts revert to the virtuous [Vasavadatta], worthy daughter of Avanti's king, whose tender frame was burnt in the flames at Lavanaka like a lotus creeper withered by frost. 1

THE JESTER

Entering

Come quick, your honour, come quick.

THE KING

Why ?

THE JESTER

Her ladyship Padmavati is suffering from headache.

THE KING

Who told you so ?

THE JESTER

Padminika told me.

THE KING

O alas !

My marriage with a wife endowed with virtues and beauty of form had softened somewhat my grief to-day, though the former wound still rankles in my heart.—Having tasted once the bitter cup of misery, I [am led to] anticipate a like fate for Padmavati also.²⁵

2

Well, where is Padmavati ?



THE JESTER

In the Ocean Pavilion her bed has been spread.

THE KING

Then show me the way there.

THE JESTER

Come, come, your honour. (Both walk about.)
This is the Ocean Pavilion. Enter, your honour.

THE KING

You go in first.

THE JESTER

Oh, so be it. (He enters.) O help! Stand back, your honour, stand back.

THE KING

Why?

THE JESTER

The light of the lamp reveals the form of this cobra here wriggling along the ground.

THE KING

Enters and looks on smiling

Oh, this is what a dolt believes to be a cobra.

Fool, for a cobra didst thou mistake a tremu-

lous wreath dropped from the entrance arch and lying outstretched on the ground below. It is that which, swayed by the gentle evening breeze, but faintly makes the movements of a serpent.

3

THE JESTER

Looking attentively

What your honour says is right. This is indeed not a cobra. (He enters and looks around himself.) Her ladyship Padmavati must have come here and gone away.

THE KING

Friend, she could not have come here.

THE JESTER

How does your honour know ?

THE KING

What is there to know ? Look !

The bed is unruffled, even as when spread ; undisturbed is the quilt ; the pillow is not crushed, nor stained with the cures against headache. No adornments are placed to divert the patient's eye. No person who goes to bed through sickness will leave it in a hurry of his own accord !

4

THE JESTER

Then let your honour sit down on this bed for a while and wait for her ladyship.

THE KING

Very well. (He sits down.) Friend, I am feeling sleepy. Tell me a story.

THE JESTER

I'll tell you one. Let your honour respond with a 'hum!' ²⁶

THE KING

Very well.

THE JESTER

There is a city called Ujjayini. In it there are some very charming bathing pools.

THE KING

What, Ujjayini?

THE JESTER

You do not like this story. I'll tell you another.

THE KING

Not indeed that I do not like it. Only—
*it reminds me of the daughter of Avanti's king,
who, at the time of starting, as she thought of her
people, shed on my own breast copious tears of love
that clung to the corner of her eyes!* ⁵

Moreover :

How often during the course of her lessons would her eyes be fixed on me and then her hand, from which the plectrum had dropped, would aimlessly swing in the air !

6

THE JESTER

Well, I'll tell you another. There is a city called Brahmadatta. In it there ruled a king called Kampilya²⁷.

THE KING

What, what ?

THE JESTER

Repeats what he has said

THE KING

Fool, say rather, king Brahmadatta, and Kampilya city.

THE JESTER

What, the king is Brahmadatta, and the city Kampilya ?

THE KING

Just so.

THE JESTER

Then let your honour wait a moment while I commit that to memory.—King Brahmadatta,

city Kampilya ! (He repeats what he has said to himself several times.) Now listen, your honour. Hallo, his honour has fallen asleep. The hour is very cold. I'll fetch my mantle.

Exit [jester]

Enter Vasavadatta and a maid

THE MAID

Come, madam, come. The princess is suffering from a very severe headache.

VASAVADATTA

Alas ! Where has the bed of Padmavati been arranged ?

THE MAID

In the Ocean Pavilion her bed has been spread.

VASAVADATTA

Then lead the way.

Both walk about

THE MAID

This is the Ocean Pavilion. Enter, madam. Meanwhile I for my part will hurry up with the ointment for her head.

Exit [maid]

VASAVADATTA

Oh, verily the gods are pitiless towards me !
 Even this Padmavati, who used to comfort my
 noble lord in his bereavement, has fallen ill.
 I'll go in. (She enters and looks around her.) Oh, the
 carelessness of servants ! Padmavati is lying
 ill, and they have left her here with just a lamp for
 her companion. There lies Padmavati asleep.
 I'll sit down.—But, if I sit aloof it will seem
 as though I am indifferent. So I'll seat myself on
 this bed. (She sits down.) Why is it, I wonder,
 that as I am sitting beside her to-day, my heart
 seems to throb with pleasure ? Happily her
 breathing is easy and regular. Her disease must
 be on the wane. Occupying just a corner of the
 bed, she seems to invite an embrace. I'll lie down
 then. (She acts lying down.)

THE KING

Talking in his sleep

O Vasavadatta !—

VASAVADATTA

Rising abruptly

Humph ! It is my noble lord and not
 Padmavati ! Have I been seen, I wonder ? The
 great vow²⁸ of the noble Yaugandharayana will,
 by my being seen, have been made in vain.

THE KING

O daughter of Avanti's king !

VASAVADATTA

Happily my noble lord is only talking in his sleep. There is no one about. I'll stay here awhile and gladden my eyes and heart.

THE KING

O darling ! O beloved pupil ! Answer me.

VASAVADATTA

I am speaking, my lord. I am speaking.

THE KING

Art thou angry ?

VASAVADATTA

O no ! O no ! I am so unhappy.

THE KING

If thou art not angry, why hast thou laid aside thy ornaments ?

VASAVADATTA

What could be better than this ?

THE KING

Are you thinking of Virachita²⁹ ?

VASAVADATTA

Wrathfully

O fie ! Even here Virachita !

THE KING

Then I implore your ladyship's pardon for
Virachita. (He stretches out his hands.)

VASAVADATTA

I have stayed long enough. I may be seen.
I'll go. But I'll first replace the arm of my noble
lord that is hanging over the edge of the couch.

She does so and retires

THE KING

Rising abruptly

Vasavadatta ! Stay, stay ! Alas !

*In hurrying out I run foul of a panel of the
door. And now I know not for sure whether this
vision is a reality !*

7

THE JESTER

Entering

Ah, his honour is awake !

THE KING

Friend, I have good news to give you. Vasava-
datta is alive !

THE JESTER

Alas ! Vasavadatta ! Where is Vasavadatta ?
Vasavadatta is long dead !

THE KING

Nay, not so, friend.

After waking me, friend, as I was lying asleep on the couch, she has disappeared. Rumanvat was deceiving me when he said that she had perished in the flames.

8

THE JESTER

Alas ! Such a thing is impossible. Maybe you saw her in a dream. Ever since I mentioned the bathing pools, you have been thinking of her ladyship.

THE KING

If that be a dream, would that I had not been awakened. And if it be an illusion, may that illusion last for ever !

9

THE JESTER

Make not yourself ridiculous ! But a fairy called the Belle of Avanti does frequent this palace. Maybe now it is she whom you saw.

THE KING

No, no !

On waking from sleep I saw those eyes without collyrium and that unbraided hair of her who is still guarding her virtue.

10

Moreover, look, friend, look !

This arm which was tightly clasped by that queen in her agitation has the hair still standing on end, though it came in contact with her but in sleep.

11

THE JESTER

Imagine not absurdities now. Come, your honour, come. Let us retire to the inner court.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Entering

Victory unto my noble lord! Our great king Darsaka³⁰ sends the following message: "Here is your honour's minister Rumanvat arrived, with a very large force for attacking Aruni; also elephants, horses, chariots, and foot-soldiers—my own auxiliaries of victory—are ready equipped. Let your honour therefore arise. Furthermore:

Thy enemies have been divided; and confidence restored among thy subjects, who are still faithful to thee. Precautions have been taken for the guarding of the rear during thy march. All that is possible to do for the demolition of the enemy has been accomplished by me. Our forces have even crossed the river Ganges. And the land of Vatsa is in thy hands! 1

THE KING

Rising

Excellent! Here now—

I shall assail that Aruni³¹, adept in misdeeds, and on a battlefield traversed by horses and elephants, like a mighty ocean, having for its furious breakers the scatter of arrows, I shall crush my foe. 13

Exeunt omnes

ACT THE SIXTH

INTERLUDE

Enter a chamberlain

THE CHAMBERLAIN

What ho ! Who is here on duty at the arched
Portal of Gold ?

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Entering

Sir, it is I, Vijaya. What may I do ?

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Lady, take this message to Udayana, whose glory has been enhanced by the acquisition of Vatsaland. Say unto him : “ Here comes the chamberlain³² of the Raibhya clan, sent by Mahasena ; and Vasavadatta’s nurse, the noble Vasundhara, sent by her ladyship Angaravati³³. They are waiting at the door.

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Sir, this is not the proper time and place for the message.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

And how is this not the proper time and place ?

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Listen, sir. There was someone in the Eastern⁸⁴ Palace of my lord playing on the lute to-day. On hearing it, my lord said : " It seems to me I hear the sound of Ghoshavati⁸⁵."

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Then ? Then ?

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Then going up to him he asked the man whence that lute came there. He replied : " I saw it lying in a thicket on the bank of the Narmada. If my lord has use for it, he is welcome to it." Taking it to himself, my lord placed it in his lap and swooned away. Then on coming to himself, with his face convulsed with tears, my lord said : " I see you, Ghoshavati. But *her* I see not !" That is how the hour is not suitable, sir. How can I announce you ?

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Announce us, lady. This also has something to do with it.

THE DOOR-KEEPER

I'll announce you at once, sir. Here comes my lord, descending from the Eastern Palace. So I shall inform him here.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

So be it, madam.

Both retire

Enter the king and the jester

THE KING

O sweet-toned [lute]! Thou didst once repose on the breasts and in the lap of the queen. How didst thou support the terrible sojourn in the jungle, where flights of birds scattered thy body with dirt?

1

And thou art unfeeling, Ghoshavati. How else couldst thou forget that the unfortunate queen—

hugged thy sides as she carried thee on her hip? [How couldst thou forget] the happy embraces between her breasts during moments of fatigue; and her plaints for me when she was parted from me; and her chatter and her smiles in the intervals of lute play?

2

THE JESTER

Enough now of this excessive sorrow, your honour.

THE KING

Nay, not so, friend.

My passion long dormant is re-awakened by the lute. But I see not that queen³⁶, to whom Ghoshavati was so dear!

3

Vasantaka, take Ghoshavati to an artisan, have her restrung and bring her back speedily.

THE JESTER

As your honour commands.

[Jester] retires with the lute

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Entering

Victory to my lord ! Here this chamberlain of the Raibhya clan, sent by Mahasena, and Vasavadatta's nurse, the noble Vasundhara, sent by queen Angaravati, are waiting at the door.

THE KING

Then call Padmavati.

THE DOOR-KEEPER

As your lordship commands.

Exit [door-keeper]

THE KING

How now ! So soon has this news³⁷ reached the ears of Mahasena !

Enter Padmavati and the door-keeper

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Come, princess, come.

PADMAVATI

Victory to my lord !

THE KING

Padmavati, didst thou hear that the chamberlain of the Raibhya clan, sent by Mahasena, and Vasavadatta's nurse, the noble Vasundhara, sent by her ladyship Angaravati, have arrived and are waiting at the door ?

PADMAVATI

I shall be glad to hear the good tidings of my relatives, my noble lord.

THE KING

It is befitting that my lady should look upon the family of Vasavadatta as her own family. Be seated, Padmavati. Why wilt thou not be seated?

PADMAVATI

Would my noble lord have me seated by his side when receiving these people?

THE KING

What harm is there?

PADMAVATI

It seems callous, as I am the second spouse of my noble lord.

THE KING

But it would be a grave fault to forbid such persons to see my wife as are entitled to do so. Be seated therefore.

PADMAVATI

As my noble lord commands. (She sits down.) I feel quite uneasy at the thought of what father or mother would have to say, my noble lord.

THE KING

Just so, Padmavati.

My heart misgives me as to what he will say. I carried away his daughter, and I have failed to guard her. Fickle fortune has brought about the obliteration of the merit I had acquired. Like a son that has roused the ire of his father, I feel afraid. 4

PADMAVATI

There is no way to help anything whose hour of doom has come.

THE DOOR-KEEPER

The chamberlain and the nurse are waiting at the door.

THE KING

Conduct them here speedily.

THE DOOR-KEEPER

As your lordship commands.

Exit [door-keeper]

Enter the chamberlain, the nurse and the door-keeper

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Oh !

Great is my joy on coming to this allied kingdom ; but when I recall the loss of the princess,

sorrow overtakes me. O Fate, could you not have been content to have robbed him of his kingdom by enemies and spared the life of the queen ? ⁵

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Here is my lord. Sir, approach him.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Approaching

Victory to my noble lord !

THE NURSE

Victory to my lord !

THE KING

Respectfully

Sir !

He who on this earth has power to work the rise and fall of royal houses—the king whose alliance I sought—is he well ? ⁶

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Yes, Mahasena is well. He inquires if all be well here also.

THE KING

Rising from his seat

What are the commands of Mahasena ?

THE CHAMBERLAIN

This is worthy of the son of Vaidehi. But let your honour be seated, and hear the message of Mahasena.

THE KING

As Mahasena commands. (He sits down.)

THE CHAMBERLAIN

"Glory to you for regaining the kingdom that had passed into the hands of enemies ! For—

*the timid and the weak are incapable of enterprise ;
and only the enterprising spirits enjoy as a rule
kingly dignity."*

7

THE KING

All that is the prowess of Mahasena, sir.

*When I was vanquished of yore he fondled
me along with his sons. Then not only did I run
away with his daughter, but I have failed to guard
her. Now after hearing about her end, he keeps
for me still the same regard. Is it not then due to
the king that I regain my proper Vatsaland ?*

8

THE CHAMBERLAIN

This is the message of Mahasena. This lady here will communicate the message of the queen.

THE KING

Ah, mother !

*She who is senior among sixteen queens, the
holy goddess of the city, my mother, who was
afflicted by grief at our departure,—is she well ?*

9

THE NURSE

My lady is well. She inquires of my lord if all be well here.

THE KING

All is well ! Mother, well, in this way !

THE NURSE

Enough now of this excessive sorrow, my lord.

THE CHAMBERLAIN

Courage, my noble lord ! Sorrowed after thus by my noble lord, Mahasena's daughter, though dead, is yet not dead. Surely,—

who can arrest the hand of death when the victim's hour has come ? Should the rope now break asunder, who can save the pitcher ? The same law holds for men and trees : in season they perish, in season they spring.

10

THE KING

Nay, not so, sir.

Mahasena's daughter, my pupil and beloved queen—how can I fail to remember her even in births to come ?

11

THE NURSE

My lady sends this message : “ Vasavadatta is no more. Thou, that art to me and to Mahasena as dear as our Gopalaka and Palaka, hast been from the first the son-in-law we wished for.³⁸ And for that purpose we brought thee to Ujjayini. Then on the pretext of the lute³⁹, we placed her

in thy hands, even without the fire-witness. With thy impetuosity thou didst elope without waiting for the nuptial celebrations. So then we had the portraits of thyself and Vasavadatta painted on picture-boards, and we celebrated the nuptial rites. We send the picture-boards to thee now. May the sight make thee happy !”

THE KING

Ah, surpassing kind and happy are the words of her ladyship !

These words are more precious than the gain of a hundred thrones ! Despite our offence the queen has not forgotten her love for us.

12

PADMAVATI

My noble lord, I would see the portraits of the elders and pay my homage to them.

THE NURSE

Behold, princess, behold. (She shows her a picture board.)

PADMAVATI

To herself, on seeing it

Humph ! Truly she bears a striking likeness to madam Avantika. (Aloud.) My noble lord, is this a good likeness of her ladyship ?

THE KING

It is not a likeness. It is her own self, I imagine. O alas !

How has the delicate complexion been cruelly destroyed, and how this sweet face has been ravaged by the flames !

13

PADMAVATI

Could I see the portrait of my noble lord, I should know whether the other is a good likeness of her ladyship or not.

THE NURSE

Look, princess, look.

PADMAVATI

On seeing it

The portrait of my noble lord shows a speaking likeness. I infer from it that the other is a good likeness of her ladyship.

THE KING

O queen, after seeing the portraits, I noticed, thou didst look first pleased and then uneasy. How is that ?

PADMAVATI

My noble lord, in this very palace there lives one who resembles this portrait closely.

THE KING

What, of Vasavadatta ?

PADMAVATI

Yes.

THE KING

Then bring her here speedily.

PADMAVATI

My noble lord, before my marriage a certain Brahman left her with me as a deposit, saying that she was his sister. Her husband being away, she shuns the sight of strangers.

THE KING

[To himself]

If she be the sister of a Brahman, evidently she is someone else. One does come across persons that resemble each other closely. 14

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Entering

Victory to my lord ! Here is a Brahman from Ujjayini, who says that he left his sister in the hands of my lady as a deposit, and is waiting at the door to claim her back.

THE KING

May he be that Brahman, Padmavati ?

PADMAVATI

He must be.

THE KING

Bid the Brahman welcome, with the formalities proper to the inner apartments, and conduct him here speedily.

THE DOOR-KEEPER

As your lordship commands.

Exit [door-keeper]

THE KING

Padmavati, wilt thou also conduct her here ?

PADMAVATI

As my noble lord commands.

Exit [Padmavati]

Enter Yaugandharayana and the door-keeper

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Ho there !

To himself

*I concealed the queen in the interest of the king.
'Tis true, the thought of his welfare alone inspired
my act. Though success has crowned my venture
now, my heart misgives me as to what he will say.* ¹⁵

THE DOOR-KEEPER

Here is my lord. Approach him, sir.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Approaching

Victory to your honour, victory !

THE KING

It seems to me I have heard the voice before.
O Brahman, did you leave your sister in the
hands of Padmavati as a deposit ?

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Why, yes.

THE KING

[To the door-keeper]

Then bring his sister before us with all speed, with all speed.

THE DOOR-KEEPER

As your lordship commands.

Exit [door-keeper]

Enter Padmavati, accompanied by her retinue,
and Vasavadatta⁴⁰

PADMAVATI

Come, madam, come. I have good news for thee.

VASAVADATTA

What is it? What is it?

PADMAVATI

Thy brother is back.

VASAVADATTA

Happily he remembers me still.

PADMAVATI

Approaching [the king]

Victory to my noble lord! Here is the deposit.

THE KING

Padmavati, render her back. A deposit should be returned in the presence of witnesses. His honour the noble Raibhya and her ladyship here will form the tribunal.

PADMAVATI

Sir, take the lady.

THE NURSE

Regarding Avantika closely

Ah, this is princess Vasavadatta !

THE KING

What, the daughter of Mahasena ? O queen, go inside with Padmavati.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

No, no. She shall not go in. Assuredly she is my sister.

THE KING

What does your honour say ? Assuredly she is the daughter of Mahasena.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

O king !

Thou art born in the race of the Bharatas. Thou art self-controlled, pure and enlightened. To stop her by force is unworthy of thee, who shouldst be the model of kingly duty.

THE KING

Well, let us see then the resemblance of form. Draw the curtain aside.

YAUGANDHARAYANA

Victory to my lord !

VASAVADATTA

Victory to my noble lord !

THE KING

Ah, this is Yaugandharayana, and this is the daughter of Mahasena !

Is it reality or but a dream that I see her once again ? That last time too I saw her thus, and was none the less deceived !

17

YAUGANDHARAYANA

I plead guilty to having taken away the queen, my lord. Will my lord deign to forgive me ?
(He throws himself at the feet of the king.)

THE KING

Raising him

You are Yaugandharayana !

Through feigned madness, through wars, through plans described in works on statecraft, all through your exertions have we been saved when we were plunged in distress deep !⁴¹

18

YAUGANDHARAYANA

I but follow the fortunes of my lord.

PADMAVATI

Ah, this is that noble lady.—In treating your ladyship as a companion, I have overstepped the bounds of propriety. I bow my head and beg to be forgiven. [She throws herself at the feet of Vasavadatta.]

VASAVADATTA

Raising Padmavati

Rise up, rise up. O fortunate woman, rise up. The suppliant herself is to blame.⁴²

PADMAVATI

I am beholden to you.

THE KING

What was thy intention, friend Yaugandharayana, in taking the queen away ?

YAUGANDHARAYANA

The saving of Kausambi⁴³ solely.

THE KING

Why didst thou leave her as a deposit in the hands of Padmavati ?

YAUGANDHARAYANA

The soothsayers Pushpabhadra and others had predicted that she would be the consort of your lordship.

THE KING

Did Rumanvat know this also ?

YAUGANDHARAYANA

My lord, everyone knew it.

THE KING

Oh, what a villain Rumanvat is, to be sure !⁴⁴

YAUGANDHARAYANA

My lord, let his honour Raibhya and her ladyship return this very day to announce the safety of the queen.

THE KING

No, no. We will all go, along with queen Padmavati.

EPILOGUE

May our lion-like king rule over this sea-girt earth, adorned with the ear-chains of Himalaya and Vindhya and enjoying the distinction of the solitary [imperial] umbrella !⁴⁵

19

Exeunt omnes

THE END

EXPLANATORY NOTES

¹ This stanza combines a benediction with a word-play on the names of the four principal *dramatis personæ* : Udayana, Vasavadatta, Padmavati, and Vasantaka. Its meaning is obscure, but is immaterial to the context.

² Magadha corresponds roughly to the southern part of the modern province of Bihar. Its capital Rajagriha has been identified with the modern Rajgir.

³ 'These things,' *i.e.*, the paraphernalia of royalty.

⁴ In another version of the story, Padmavati is called the daughter of the king of Magadha. See Appendix, page 91.

⁵ In speaking of his majesty the chamberlain should refer to him as 'Maharaja'. Feeling that, in this instance, it is necessary to specify him by his personal name, the chamberlain, in all humility, avails himself of a circumlocution.

⁶ See note 2.

⁷ This justifies the sudden change of attitude of Yaugandharayana towards Padmavati. See verse 3.

⁸ Ujjayini was the capital of the kingdom of Avanti, the home of Vasavadatta.

⁹ 'Ours,' because Padmavati would then become the sister-in-law of Vasavadatta.

¹⁰ Padmavati unwittingly repeats the words already spoken by Vasavadatta. This is intended to show a spontaneous reciprocity of feeling between them.

¹¹ The minister is now solely answerable for the safety and the honour of the queen; hence his concern.

¹² This person is the chamberlain.

¹³ Vatsa was the name of the kingdom of Udayana. Its capital was Kausambi, the modern Kosam, near Allahabad.

¹⁴ Chakravaka. According to a poetic convention the male and female chakravaka keep together during the day; at night, however, they are always separated, as, in consequence of a curse, they are destined to pass the night apart. They are frequently mentioned in Indian literature as patterns of marital constancy. See another allusion to the chakravaka at the beginning of the third act.

¹⁵ The original contains a pun, depending upon the double meaning of the Sanskrit word *raga* ('redness' and 'love'), which it is difficult, if not quite impossible, to reproduce in English. The idea is this. The hands of the players, being extremely red, they show that they are tired with the long game. Consequently Padmavati cannot control their movements now as well as she did at the beginning of the game. The poet expresses this idea fancifully by suggesting that the hands, being inspired with love (*raga*), are behaving as though they would have nothing to do with Padmavati; they just follow their own inclinations and disregard completely the wishes and directions of Padmavati.

¹⁶ Here is another pun. The hidden meaning is: "I fancy I see the faces of thy suitors on every side."

¹⁷ Mahasena literally means 'one who has a large army'.

18 The refusal might have been construed as a gratuitous affront, especially as the king of Vatsa was then supposed to be a young man, without issue.

19 See note 14.

20 Kama is the Indian Cupid.

21 Bandhujiva. *Pentapetes Phoenicia*.

22 Sapta-chhada. *Alstonia scholaris*.

23 Kasa. *Saccharum spontaneum*.

24 In the original these words of Padmāvati and the king change places.

25 The indisposition of Padmavati makes the king fear that he might lose her as he had lost Vasavadattā.

26 The response 'hum!' from the listener is indicative of continued attention.

27 Kampilya is the name of a town in the land of the Panchalas in the north of India.

28 The vow of Yaugandharayana was made at the time when plans were laid for the restoration of the dethroned king. A similar vow forms the theme of another play belonging to this group of dramas.

29 Virachita is the name of a former mistress of Udayana. See Appendix, page 90.

30 Darsaka was the king of Magadha and brother of Padmavati.

31 Aruni was the upstart who had ousted Udayana and usurped the throne of Vatsa.

32 The speaker himself is the chamberlain despatched by Mahasena.

33 Angaravati is the mother of Vasavadatta.

34 The name of the palace is uncertain, the reading being doubtful.

35 Ghosravati is the magic lute of Udayana. See Appendix, page 86.

36 The queen is Vasavadatta.

37 'This news' refers to his recent marriage with Padmavati.

38 She implies that the death of Vasavadatta makes no difference to their sentiments towards him.

39 For an explanation of 'the pretext of the lute', see Appendix, page 87f.

40 It is to be supposed that Vasavadatta enters and stands apart, concealed behind a curtain and unseen by most of the persons present.

41 These incidents in the life of the minister form the theme of another play belonging to the group. See Appendix, page 88f.

42 The reading, as it stands, is not fully intelligible; an emendation appears necessary.

43 Kausambi was the capital of the kingdom of Vatsa.

44 See verse 14 of the first act.

45 The umbrella, from the shelter it affords, has been chosen as one of the insignia of Indian royalty. The 'solitary umbrella' denotes universal sovereignty.

APPENDIX

THE LEGEND OF UDAYANA AND VASAVADATTA

(Abridged, with slight alterations, from C. H. Tawney's
translation of the *Katha-sarit-sagara**)

THERE is a land famous under the name of Vatsa. In the centre of it is a great city named Kausambi. In it dwelt a king named Satanika, sprung from the Pandava family. He had a son born to him called Sahasranika, who married Mrigavati, daughter of a king of Ayodhya. In course of time Mrigavati promised to bear a child to king Sahasranika. And then she asked the king to gratify her longing by filling a tank full of blood for her to bathe in. Accordingly the king, in order to gratify her desire, had a tank filled with the juice of lac and other red extracts, so that it seemed to be full of blood. And while she was bathing in that lake, a bird of the race of Garuda suddenly pounced upon her and carried her off thinking she was raw flesh ; but on discovering that she was alive, it abandoned her and, as fate would have it, left her on the mountain Udayachala. The girl tardy with the weight of her womb, desiring to hurl herself down from a precipice, and thinking upon that lord of hers, wept aloud ; and a hermit's son, hearing that, came up and found her looking like the incarnation of sorrow. And he, after questioning the queen about her adventures, led her off to the hermitage of Jamadagni. Some days after, the blameless one gave birth to a charmingly beautiful son. At that moment a voice was heard from heaven : " An august king of great renown has been born, Udayana by name, and his son shall be the monarch of all Vidyadharas ! " Gradually that boy grew up to size and strength in that grove of asceticism. Out of love for him Mrigavati drew off from her own wrist, and placed on his, a bracelet marked with the name of Sahasranika. Then that Udayana, roaming about once upon a time in pursuit of deer, beheld in the forest a snake captured by a Sabara. The generous Udayana gave that Sabara the bracelet which his mother had bestowed on him, and persuaded him to set the snake at liberty.

* *The Katha Sarit Sagara* or *Ocean of the Streams of Story*, translated from the original Sanskrit by C.H. Tawney. Calcutta 1880.

The snake, being pleased with Udayana, bowed before him and said : " I am the eldest brother of Vasuki, called Vasunemi. Receive from me, whom thou hast preserved, this lute, sweet in the sounding of its strings, divided according to the division of the quarter-tones ; and betel leaf, together with the art of weaving unfading garlands, and adorning the forehead with marks that never become indistinct." Udayana, furnished with all these, and dismissed by the snake, returned to the hermitage of Jamadagni. Meanwhile the Sabara was caught attempting to sell the ornament marked with the king's name, and brought up in court before the king. Learning from the Sabara the whereabouts of Mrigavatia and Udayana, the king made the Sabara show him the way, and set out with his army for that hermitage on the Udayachala. In a few days he reached that peaceful hermitage of Jamadagni. The hermit handed over to him that queen Mrigavati with her son. Bidding adieu to Jamadagni, the king set out for his own city. Soon after his return the king appointed his son Udayana crown-prince, and assigned to him as advisers the sons of his own ministers, Vasantaka, Rumanvat and Yaugandharayana. In due course that king Sahasranika established in his throne his excellent son Udayana, and accompanied by his ministers and his beloved wife ascended the Himalaya to prepare for the last great journey.

Then Udayana took the kingdom of Vatsa, which his father had bequeathed to him and, establishing himself in Kausambi, ruled his subjects well. But gradually he began to devolve the cares of his empire upon his ministers Yaugandharayana and others, and gave himself up entirely to pleasures. He was continually engaged in the chase, and night and day he played on the melodious lute which Vasuki gave him long ago ; and he subdued evermore infuriated wild elephants, overpowered by the fascinating spell of its strings' dulcet sound, and, taming them, brought them home. Only one anxiety he had to bear. He kept thinking : " Nowhere is a wife found equal to me in birth and personal appearance. The maid named Vasavadatta alone has a liking for me, but how is she to be obtained ?"

Mahasena also in Ujjayini thought : " There is no suitable husband to be found for my daughter in the world except one Udayana by name, and he has ever been my enemy. Then how can I make him my son-in-law and my submissive ally ? There is only one device which can effect it. He wanders about alone

in the forest capturing elephants. I will make use of this failing of his to entrap him and bring him here by a stratagem. And as he is acquainted with music, I will make this daughter of mine his pupil, and his eye will without doubt be charmed with her and he will certainly become my son-in-law and my obedient ally." In spite of this decision, he resolved to try negotiation first. Accordingly he gave this order to an ambassador: "Go and give the king of Vatsa this message from me: 'My daughter desires to be thy pupil in music. If thou love us come here and teach her.'" The resolute king of Vatsa sent in return an ambassador to Mahasena with the following reply: "If thy daughter desires to become my pupil, then send her here." When he had sent that reply, that king of Vatsa said to his ministers: "I will march and bring Mahasena here in chains." When he heard that, the chief minister Yaugandharayana said: "This is not a fitting thing to do, my king; nor is it in thy power to do it. For Mahasena is a mighty monarch, and not to be subdued by thee." And in proof of this he related how king Mahasena had performed a terrible penance and received from goddess Durga a sword by means of whose magic power he was invincible to all his enemies. He further narrated how Mahasena had married a Daitya maiden and two sons were born to him, Gopalaka and Palaka; how Mahasena had held a feast in honour of Indra on their account; and how Indra, being pleased, said to the king in a dream, "By my favour thou shalt obtain a matchless daughter"; then, how in course of time a graceful daughter was born to that king, whom the king had given the name Vasavadatta. The minister concluded by saying that that king could not be conquered by Udayana, firstly because he was so powerful, and then also because his realm was situated in a difficult country.

In the meanwhile the ambassador, sent by the king of Vatsa in answer to Mahasena's embassy, went and told that monarch his master's reply. Mahasena for his part, on hearing it, began to reflect: "It is certain that that proud king of Vatsa will not come here, and I cannot send my daughter to his court. So I must capture him by some stratagem and bring him here as a prisoner." Having thus reflected, the king had made a large artificial elephant like his own and after filling it with concealed warriors, he placed it in the Vindhya forest. There the scouts of the king of Vatsa discerned it from a distance and, returning to their master, informed him in these words: "O king, we

have seen a single elephant roaming in the Vindhya forest, such that nowhere in this wide world his equal is to be found." The king spent that night in thinking: "If I obtain that mighty elephant, a fit match for Nadagiri the elephant of Mahasena, then will that Mahasena be certainly in my power, and he will of his own accord give me his daughter Vasavadatta." So in the morning he started for the Vindhya forest disregarding the advice of his ministers; nor did he pay any attention to the fact that the astrologers said that the position of the heavenly bodies at the moment of his departure portended the acquisition of a maiden together with imprisonment. When the king reached the Vindhya forest he made his troops halt at a distance, and accompanied by scouts only, holding in his hands his melodious lute, he entered the great forest. The king saw on the southern slope of the Vindhya range that elephant looking like a real one, pointed out to him by his scouts from a distance. He slowly approached it, alone, playing on his lute, thinking how he should bind it, and singing in melodious tones. As his mind was fixed on his music, and the shades of evening were setting in, that king did not perceive that the supposed wild elephant was an artificial one. Then suddenly issuing from that artificial elephant, a body of soldiers in full armour surrounded that king of Vatsa. The king in a rage drew his hunting knife, but while he was fighting with those in front of him, he was seized by others coming up behind. And those warriors with the help of others carried that king of Vatsa into the presence of Mahasena. Mahasena for his part came out to meet him with the utmost respect, and entered with him the city of Ujjayini. Shortly after their return the king of Avanti made over his daughter Vasavadatta to Udayana and said to him: "Prince, teach this lady music; in this way you will obtain a happy issue to your adventure. Do not despond." When he beheld that fair lady, the mind of the king of Vatsa was so steeped in love that he put out of sight his anger. So the king of Vatsa dwelt in the concert-room of Mahasena's palace, teaching Vasavadatta to sing, with his eyes ever fixed on her.

In the meanwhile the men who had accompanied the king returned to Kausambi. The calm and resolute Yaugandharayana, seeing that the country was loyal, said to Rumanvat and others: "All of you must remain here, ever on the alert. You must guard this country. I will go accompanied by Vasantaka only, will without fail accomplish the deliverance of the king and

bring him home." Having said this and entrusted to Rumanvat the care of the subjects, Yaugandharayana set out for Kausambi with Vasantaka. On his way Yaugandharayana by means of a charm suddenly altered his own shape. That charm made him deformed, hunchbacked and old, and besides gave him the appearance of a madman. In the same way, Yaugandharayana, by means of that very charm, gave Vasantaka a body full of outstanding veins, with a large stomach and an ugly mouth with projecting teeth. Having entered Ujjayini, singing and dancing, beheld with curiosity by all, he made his way to the king's palace. There he excited by that behaviour the curiosity of the king's wives, and was at last heard by Vasavadatta. She quickly sent a maid and had him brought to the concert-room. Thereupon he made a sign to the king of Vatsa, who quickly recognized him. Udayana sent Vasavadatta out of the room on some pretext, and then he had a long and undisturbed talk with his minister. Yaugandharayana communicated to the king, according to the prescribed form, spells for breaking chains, and at the same time he furnished him with other charms for winning the heart of Vasavadatta. Having done so Yaugandharayana went out. When Vasavadatta returned, the king induced her to summon Vasantaka, who was waiting at the door of the palace. Vasantaka amused the princess by telling her stories and secured her favour.

As time went on, Vasavadatta began to feel a great affection for the king of Vatsa, and to take part with him against her father. Then Yaugandharayana came in again to see the king of Vatsa, making himself invisible to all others who were there. And he gave him the following information in private in the presence of Vasantaka only: "King, you were made captive by Mahasena by means of an artifice. And he now wishes to give you his daughter, and set you at liberty, treating you with all honour. So let us carry off his daughter and escape, for in this way we shall have revenged ourselves upon the haughty monarch. Now the king has given Vasavadatta a female elephant called Bhadravati. And no other elephant but Nadagiri is swift enough to catch her up. The driver of this elephant is a man here called Asadhaka, and him I have won over to our side by giving him much wealth. So you must mount that elephant with Vasavadatta, fully armed, and start from this place secretly by night." The king of Vatsa stored up all the instructions of Yaugandharayana in his heart, and when Vasavadatta came told

her what Yaugandharayana had said to him. She consented to the proposal, and made up her mind to start. They made good their escape from Ujjayini, and having successfully overcome the obstacles which befell them on the way arrived safely in Kausambi. Not long after came Gopalaka the brother of Vasavadatta, bringing with him the good wishes of Mahasena and his queen. Then the king of Vatsa, having celebrated the great festival of his marriage, considered all his wishes gratified, now that he was linked to Vasavadatta. But in course of time he became faithless, and secretly loved an attendant of the harem named Virachita, with whom he had previously had an intrigue. One day he made a mistake and addressed the queen by her name; thereupon he had to conciliate her by clinging to her feet.

Once again the king of Vatsa devolved the cares of his empire upon his ministers, Yaugandharayana and others, and gave himself up entirely to pleasures. Seeing this the minister Yaugandharayana reflected that the ministers themselves must take such steps as that he shall obtain the empire of the whole earth, which was his hereditary right. He called the ministers together and said to them: "Let us do our king a good turn; let us gain for him the empire of the earth. In this undertaking our only adversary is Pradyota, the king of Magadha; for he is a foe in the rear that is always attacking us behind. So we must ask for our sovereign that pearl of princesses, his daughter named Padmavati. And by our cleverness we will conceal Vasavadatta somewhere and setting fire to her house, we will give out everywhere that the queen is burnt. In no other case will the king of Magadha give his daughter to our sovereign, for when I requested him to do so on a former occasion, he answered, 'I will not give my daughter, whom I love more than myself, to the king of Vatsa, for he is passionately attached to his wife Vasavadatta.' Moreover, as long as the queen is alive, the king of Vatsa will not marry anyone else; but if a report is once spread that the queen is burnt, all will succeed." The other ministers were at first sceptical about the success of the scheme, but the resourceful Yaugandharayana, who had reflected on every possibility and had a ready answer to all objections, was in the end successful in removing the doubts of his colleagues, and securing their co-operation. Then the ministers won over to their side Vasavadatta's brother Gopalaka. Then Yaugandharayana, Gopalaka, and Rumanvat deliberated as follows: "Let us adopt the

artifice of going to Lavanaka with the king and queen ; for that district is a border district near the kingdom of Magadha. And because it contains admirable hunting grounds, it will tempt the king to absent himself from the palace, so we can set the women's apartments there on fire and carry out the plan on which we have determined. And by an artifice we will take the queen and leave her in the palace of Padmavati, in order that Padmavati herself may be a witness to the queen's virtuous behaviour in a state of concealment."

Thus Yaugandharayana and the other ministers managed to conduct the king of Vatsa with his beloved to Lavanaka. One day the king having gone to hunt, the wise Yaugandharayana, accompanied by Gopalaka, having arranged what was to be done and taking with him also Rumanvat and Vasantaka, went secretly to the queen Vasavadatta. There he used various representations to persuade her to assist in furthering the king's interests. And she agreed to the proposal, though it inflicted on her the pain of separation. Thereupon the skilful Yaugandharayana made her assume the appearance of a Brahman woman. And he made Vasantaka like a Brahman boy, and he himself assumed the appearance of an old Brahman. Then he took the queen, and, accompanied by Vasantaka, set out leisurely for the town of Magadha. Then Rumanvat burnt her pavilion with fire, and exclaimed aloud : " Alas ! alas ! The queen and Vasantaka are burnt." Then Yaugandharayana with Vasantaka and Vasavadatta reached the city of the king of Magadha, and seeing the princess Padmavati in the garden, he went up to her with these two, though the guards tried to prevent him. And Padmavati, when she saw the queen Vasavadatta in the dress of a Brahman woman, fell in love with her at first sight. The princess ordered the guards to desist from their opposition, and had Yaugandharayana conducted into her presence. Under the pretext that her husband had deserted her, Yaugandharayana left Vasavadatta, whom he introduced as his daughter, in the care of Padmavati, and returned to Lavanaka. Then Padmavati took with her Vasavadatta, who was passing under the name of Avantika, and Vasantaka, who accompanied her in the form of a one-eyed boy, and entered her splendidly adorned palace. Padmavati soon perceived that Vasavadatta was a person of very high rank, and suspecting that she was some distinguished person remaining there under concealment, entertained her to luxurious comfort to her heart's content.

When the king of Vatsa returned to Lavanaka and saw the women's apartments reduced to ashes by fire, and heard from the ministers that the queen was burnt with Vasantaka, he fell on the ground and was robbed of his senses by unconsciousness. Then the king, judging from the behaviour of Yaugandharayana and Gopalaka and from sundry predictions, suspected that the queen might possibly be alive, and lived in the hope of being some day re-united with her.

The spies of the king of Magadha who were at Lavanaka went off to him and told him all. When he heard this the king was once more anxious to give to the king of Vatsa his daughter Padmavati. By the advice of Yaugandharayana the king of Vatsa accepted that proposal. And not long after, the marriage of the king of Vatsa and Padmavati was celebrated with due pomp and ceremony. And Yaugandharayana, calling the fire to witness on that occasion, made the king of Magadha undertake never to injure his master. In the meanwhile Vasavadatta remained unobserved, hoping for the glory of her husband. But Yaugandharayana, being afraid that the king of Vatsa would see Vasavadatta, and that so the whole secret would be divulged, prevailed upon him to set out from that place soon after the celebration of the marriage, escorting his bride Padmavati. And Vasavadatta went secretly in the rear of the army, making the transformed Vasantaka precede her. At last the king of Vatsa reached Lavanaka and entered his own house, together with his bride, but thought all the time only of the queen Vasavadatta. The queen also arrived and entered the house of Gopalaka at night. There she saw her brother Gopalaka and embraced his neck weeping. And at that moment arrived Yaugandharayana, together with Rumanvat. And while he was engaged in dispelling the queen's grief caused by the great effort she had made, the chamberlains that were waiting round the house of Gopalaka repaired to Padmavati and said, "Queen, Avantika has arrived; but she has in a strange way dismissed us and gone to the house of prince Gopalaka." When Padmavati heard that, she was alarmed and in the presence of the king of Vatsa answered them: "Go and say to Avantika, 'The queen says, you are a deposit in my hands. So what business have you where you are? Come where I am.' " When they had departed with the message, the king asked Padmavati in private who made for her the unfading garlands and forehead streaks, which he had observed on her person. Then she said: "It is all the product of the great artistic

skill of the lady named Avantika who was deposited in my hands by a certain Brahman." No sooner did the king hear that than he went off to the house of Gopalaka, thinking that surely Vasavadatta would be there. And he entered the house, within which were the queen, Gopalaka, the two ministers and Vasantaka. There he saw Vasavadatta returned from banishment. And that couple afflicted with grief, lamented so that even the face of Yaugandharayana was washed with tears. And Padmavati, who gradually found out the truth with respect to the king and Vasavadatta, was reduced to the same state. And Vasavadatta frequently exclaimed with tears, "What profit is there in my life that causes only sorrow to my husband?" Then the calm Yaugandharayana said to the king of Vatsa: "King, I have done all this in order to make you universal emperor, by marrying you to the daughter of the sovereign of Magadha, and the queen is not in the slightest degree to blame; moreover, this, her rival wife, is witness to her good behaviour during her absence from you." Thereupon Padmavati, whose mind was free from jealousy, said, "I am ready to enter the fire on the spot to prove her innocence." And Vasavadatta, having firmly resolved, said, "I must enter the fire to clear from suspicion the mind of the king." Then the wise Yaugandharayana rinsed his mouth and spoke a blameless speech: "If I have been a benefactor to this king, and if the queen is free from stain, speak, ye guardians of the world; if it is not so, I will part from my body." Thus he spoke and ceased, and this heavenly utterance was heard: "Happy art thou, O king, that hast for minister Yaugandharayana, and for wife Vasavadatta, who in a former birth was a goddess; not the slightest blame attaches to her." Then the king of Vatsa and Gopalaka praised that proceeding of Yaugandharayana's, and the former already considered that the whole earth was subject to him. Then the king possessing these two wives, whose affection was every day increasing by living with him, was in a state of supreme felicity.

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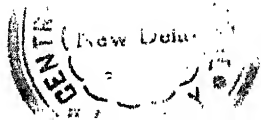
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